

Walmajarri language

Walmajarri (many other names; see below) is a Pama–Nyungan language spoken in Western Australia by the Walmadjari and related peoples.

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Names

Names for this language break down along the three dialects:

- Walmajarri, Walmatjarri, Walmatjari, Walmadjari, Walmatjiri, Walmajiri, Walmatjeri, Walmadjeri, Walmadyeri, Walmaharri, Wolmeri, Wolmera, Wulmari
- Bililuna, Pililuna
- Jiwarliny, Juwaliny, Tjiwaling, Tjiwarlin

Speakers

Communities with a Walmajarri population are:

- Bayulu
- Djugerari (Cherrabun)
- Junjuwa (Fitzroy Crossing)
- Looma
- Millijidee
- Mindibungu (Bililuna)
- Mindi Rardi (Fitzroy Crossing)
- Mulan
- Ngumpan

Walmajarri	
Region	Western Australia
Ethnicity	Walmadjari
Native speakers	283 (2016 census) ^[1]
Language family	<div>Pama–Nyungan<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ngumpin–Yapa<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ngumbin<ul style="list-style-type: none">Walmajarri</div>
Dialects	Walmatjarri <div>Tjuwalinj</div> <div>Pililuna</div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	wmt
Glottolog	walm1241 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/walm1241) ^[2]
AIATSIS ^[3]	A66 (https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/A66)

- Wangkajungka (Christmas Creek)
- Yakanarra
- Yungngora

The Walmajarri people used to live in the Great Sandy Desert. The effects of colonialism took them to the cattle stations, towns and missions in the North and scattered them over a wide area. The geographical distance accounts for the fact that there are several dialects, which have been further polarized by the lack of contact and further influenced by neighbouring languages.

Phonology

Vowels

	<u>Front</u>	<u>Back</u>
<u>High</u>	i, iː	u, uː
<u>Low</u>	a, aː	

Consonants

	<u>Peripheral</u>		<u>Laminal</u>	<u>Apical</u>	
	<u>Bilabial</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Alveolar</u>	<u>Retroflex</u>
<u>Stop</u>	p	k	c	t	ʈ
<u>Nasal</u>	m	ŋ	ɲ	n	ɳ
<u>Lateral</u>			ʎ	l	ɭ
<u>Rhotic</u>				r	
<u>Approximant</u>	w		j		ɻ

Morphology

Walmajarri is a suffixing language. There are no prefixes.

Syntax

Walmajarri has 4 syntactic cases: nominative, ergative, dative and assessorary case. The cases assign different meanings to the noun phrases of a sentence. Therefore, the word order can vary quite freely. Subject, Object or Verb can appear initial, final, medial in sentence.

However, the second position of a sentence is always reserved for the Verbal Auxiliary. Sometimes referred to as a Catalyst, the Verbal Auxiliary indicates the mood of a sentence (similar to the English auxiliaries), but also cross-references its noun phrases. The person and number of the noun phrases in their syntactic cases are shown in the Verbal Auxiliary.

References

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2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Walmajarri" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/walm1241>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. A66 (<https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/A66>) Walmajarri at the Australian Indigenous Languages Database, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
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External links

- Handbook of Western Australian languages South of the Kimberly (http://coombs.anu.edu.au/WWWVLPages/AborigPages/LANG/WA/4_5_8.htm) (Walmajarri)
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